

Wandsworth Older People's Forum Newsletter

Autumn 2015

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Possible Alzheimers Drug that will work

Experiments on mice with two licensed drugs show that brain degeneration can be halted.

Clinical trials with alzheimers patients will be the next step and there is some hope

that it may be possible to slow the progress of the disease by up to 10 years.

I remember now!!



The Campaign to End Loneliness

Older People's Network Conference

Loneliness and Isolation are different issues. Isolation can be clearly identified by the number of contacts a person may or may not have within a period of time. However, we can feel lonely even if we are living with people.

Kate Jopling from the Campaign to End Loneliness stressed this point when she addressed more than 50 people who attended the Network Conference on July 9th.

Kate with Tony Tuck and Lilius Gillies



Research has shown that there are risk factors which may indicate potential loneliness. These include lack of transport, poor health, loss of mobility, sight or hearing, low income, forced retirement and no contact with family.

There is also clear evidence that loneliness can cause mental health issues such as depression or confusion and physical health issues such as cardiovascular problems. This may be because if we are lonely we are less likely to eat healthily or do exercise.



and more likely to smoke or use alcohol. People may be reluctant to admit loneliness because they feel shame.

In order to tackle this problem it is vital for communities and statutory agencies to work together. A community police officer at the conference said that he encounters many lonely older people who are victims of crime, accidents or bereavements and he does not know where to refer them or what advice to give.

After group discussions a panel including health representatives Hannah Gill and Vedrana Illic agreed that co-ordination, training and building on existing resources is a good way forward.

WOPF is talking with statutory and voluntary agencies about a plan to raise funds for a local Project Worker to coordinate a campaign to end loneliness in Wandsworth.

Hospital Problems

One of our readers wrote to the editor about some bad experiences she had while in hospital that she wishes to share with readers.

Toilets

She pointed out that visits to A & E or outpatients often involve a long wait and that older people are likely to need the toilet. She did not know where the toilet was and did not want to go in case she missed her turn. She suggests that on arrival at reception, older people should be told where the toilet is and how to seek help to go.

Mobile phones

As an in-patient, she was disturbed by mobile phones being on during the night and suggests that this should be prohibited.

Ignored and isolated

Our reader had plenty of family visits but she worried about older people she saw waiting for hours to be taken to the toilet, ringing bells constantly because they were alone and confused and had no one to talk to day in and day out. She thought that volunteers might be used to support people without family and alleviate fear and loneliness.

Respect for staff

Our reader was shocked when a nurse who was supporting a patient with great dedication was racially abused. Nothing was done and she hopes that valued staff are supported when this happens.

Making Improvements

WOPF appreciates the reasons why our reader chose to be anonymous but we recommend it is worthwhile to contact the PALS service at the hospital which deals constructively with complaints.

A&E a 'Place of Fear' for older people

At the Royal College of Nursing June conference their General Secretary said that older people were spending up to 20 hours on trolleys in hard pressed A & E departments and a specialist dementia nurse said that elderly patients she meets describe A & E as a 'terrifying experience'. College research has shown that 18% of permanent nursing posts in A & E Departments are unfilled and they called on the Government to address the crisis in A & E.



Singing the Old Songs



Malcolm Newton Director of Music at National Theatre plays and sings to WOPF members in June.



Your Care at Home at End of Life

'I would much prefer to stay at home but I wouldn't want my daughter to have the stress of doing everything for me' said a participant in a discussion on End of Life Care Planning.

This lady was very pleased to hear about a new NHS service in Wandsworth called the **Care Co-ordination Centre**.

If you think you or the person you care for may be in the last months of their life, you can call the Care Co-ordination team who will

ensure that services are joined up in a way that can allow you to remain comfortably at home.

This could involve access to social care or support from district nurses, overnight nursing care and the provision of equipment such as rails, walking aids or commodes.

Marie Curie's nursing team is part of the Centre and can provide specialist support in the day time and night care to give a break to family and carers.

Trinity Hospice is also part of the partnership.

They offer out-patient clinics, activities, pain relief treatment and respite care.

The aim of the Centre is to make those last months together enjoyable and stress free at home rather than being spent on a hospital ward with loved ones having to visit at busy visiting times.

To refer yourself or a loved ones or for any queries call:
0300 3000 116
7am– 10.30 pm week
9am-5pm weekends



Marie Curie: Care and support through terminal illness



Trinity Hospice
Living every moment



TELL ME!! - Age UK launches campaign to improve access to info

Campaign researchers found that most public bodies do try hard to communicate with their communities, but, of those who tried, 35% of older people couldn't find information about home care, 29% couldn't find information about specialist transport options and 27% failed to find listings of local health support services.

A key finding was that some older people found obtaining information online or over the phone particularly difficult. Some of the problems encountered by older people not being able to find information include not having internet access, websites not being user friendly and answer-phone automated response systems not having relevant options, resulting in long periods on hold.

One recommendation was to hold regular **Information Open Days** where, for instance, trained Council staff answer questions face to face and demonstrate how to find information which would have real benefit to older people and the whole community.

Other recommendations include involving older people in the design and testing of websites to ensure accessibility, and ensuring that various **printed forms of information** are widely available.

More info at <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/news--campaigns/tell-me/>





Exhilarating!!

Doris Long (101) abseils down Spinaker Tower in Portsmouth having enjoyed it so much when she did it last year for her 100th birthday.



Breast Cancer

One in three women diagnosed with breast cancer is over 70. We must all regularly look carefully for any changes in our breasts, not just lumps and check them with a doctor.

Cup of tea dear?

In a recent speech, Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt urged people to keep in touch with older relatives and neighbours in response to statistics indicating that significant numbers of over 65s die alone.

The Guardian (14.7.15) asked a range of older people what they thought about the idea. Enid (85) is largely in favour but said that some people may feel patronised. Gill, who has lived on her own for 32 years is very busy in the week but admits that weekends can be lonely. She was not impressed with Mr. Hunt, believing that he was looking at a cheap way of avoiding public responsibility.

Francis (89) has been lonely since the death of her husband and really appreciates the weekly tea party hosted by a volunteer from a local charity. Another respondent pointed out the dangers of unscrupulous individuals using the opportunity to financially abuse elders.



Seeking Patient Perspectives on NHS

Dr Sian Job, retired GP, told the July Forum meeting that she was keen to find out more about our organization. Having recently experienced her own health problem, she had found being a patient very different from being a doctor.



Dr Job's current role is to ensure that people's experiences of the local NHS, good or bad, are heard by the CCG which can then learn from what patients say. Every GP practice has a Patients' Participation Group which welcome new patient members. At the meetings, patients and staff discuss how the practice works, experiences of hospital care and the development of improvements or new services. Dr Job urged people to get involved and help ensure patients voices are heard at the CCG. *Lilias Gillies*

Join the Monday Club

We are a group for local over 50s who have been running for over 10 years and meet weekly from 2pm-3.30 pm at St Barnabas Church 146 Lavenham Road Southfields (wheelchair accessible). An average attendance of 20 members enjoy conversation, a light hearted quiz and our famous home made cakes! There is a charge of £1.20. We welcome new members. Enquiries 0208 870 5364 to Margaret Brett



STOP PRESS

Wandsworth Carers' Centre, with Bluebird Care and the Alzheimers Society will become *Carers Partnership Wandsworth* to deliver the local contract for information, advice and advocacy, peer support, carers' respite, back care and health and social care liaison and training.

Meeting older people where they are: taking them where they want to go

Mac Downes reflects on 5 years Outreach work

As I retire after five years of working as WOPF's outreach worker, I am remembering how, 5 Years ago WOPF received a Grassroots Grant to make people aware of WOPF and what it had to offer. This aim was turned on its head in that WOPF learnt about what older people had to offer - rich life experiences, companionship and organising skills.

Supporting residents in Sheltered Housing Complexes to set up their own Residents' Association could be dispiriting at the start when it seemed that out of 30 residents, only three or four showed any interest. My advice was LET'S GET ON WITH IT! And lo and behold, once things started, as many as twelve others would join until there was a critical mass sufficient to make things happen. Inevitably, there were always some who just didn't want to join in and a few who looked on with arms folded simply in order to criticise.

Originally, it seemed as if sheltered schemes would be an easy place to start because the residents already had a community space, a scheme manager and lots of captive volunteers. We soon learned otherwise!

The demographics of the sheltered resident population has changed dramatically over the past few years. The lowered age limit of 55 years has brought in two distinctly different groups. One is independent residents with an active life outside the scheme and the other very vulnerable residents, often with high support needs. In the meantime many long standing residents are

now too frail to help.

Previous 'Wardens' are now Sheltered Housing Officers who visit but do not live in. Similarly Registered Social Landlord schemes have a variety of titles for their Managers but with the same trend towards less 24hour support.

Almost without exception these officers continue to offer a dedicated service- not always understood by visiting health and care staff. Possibly the observation from a former sheltered manager sums it up: 'Mac - you do the touchy feely stuff- we will manage the building'

I am very proud of WOPF's outreach work. Our 3 years funding by Comic Relief enabled us to set up and sustain 10 Residents Associations and Clubs and access more than £150K towards activities and additional facilities. It enabled many people to run activities for themselves and have things happening around them that are by them and not simply for them.

However, at the end of five years, when I have been privileged to enjoy the company of so many older Wandsworth residents (plus consume a vast quantity of tea and cake!) I think we should be aware of 5 key challenges.

1. Some groups will never be self-sustaining; they will need ongoing external support. This is particularly true for extra care sheltered schemes. Hopefully WOPF will build on my work and continue to act as the external body if further fund raising is successful.

2. Similarly care/nursing homes need some input.

We pioneered the setting up of a Friends Association for George Potter Nursing Home in Battersea and saw how external input makes a massive difference to the residents. But funding will have to be found if the scheme is to extend to homes across the borough

3 **Our work has succeeded in dragging older people away from passive solo TV viewing towards social activity. The greatest challenge is the identification of older people living on their own who are lonely and lacking ongoing social interaction. Research has shown how this isolation remains one of the key determinants for poor health and significantly early death. WOPF is planning to work jointly with health and social care providers, other voluntary and community groups and charitable funders to try and meet this challenge.**

4. Taking people where they want to be? The most frequent request was for 'Day Trips' but no one would fund them as they were seen as an activity 'with little long lasting benefit'. Surely a 'day out' is one of the best 'well-being' activities ever invented. I leave the final word to a dearly departed lady: 'It would be nice to get out of my flat for a while and feel the wind on my face'

Mac continues as a volunteer. But he will be missed for his dedication, commitment and great sense of humour. **Page 5**



Fit, Active, Involved and Interested

Asian Women's Association
020 8875 9465

Wandsworth Over 50s Activity Group 07958440808

Share Community for adults with physical and other disabilities. 020 7924 2949

St. Bede's Centre for Deaf people 020 7021 4340

Golf for over 50s 020 8871 2468.

St. Michael's Older people's Activity Centre Battersea
020 7228 024

Expert Patients group— understand and manage condition or illness 020 8871 5163

Keep on Moving (60+) FRIDAY 2-3PM £3 Southfields Library, Wimbledon Park Road, SW19 6NL

Walk 4 life — free walks Battersea Park Thursdays 10 30, Tooting Common 9am or 12 noon Tuesdays St. George's Park 12 15pm Weds . Details 8871 6371

Tai Chi MONDAY 12.30- 1.30PM . St John's Hill Community Centre, Peabody Estate, Battersea, SW11

Furzedown Project for older people—020 8677 4283 Check us out on YOUTUBE

Ramblers 0207 9242949

Hestia Age Activity Centre 020 8767 8426

Katherine Low Settlement meeting place, advice, support & activities for older people 020 7223 2845/6471

Pocklington Resource Centre for People with Visual Impairments 020 8675 4246

Line Dancing for Over 50s Weds and Thurs, 10-12 St John's Hill Centre, Peabody Estate, St John's Hill, SW11.

Keep Fit (50+) FRIDAY 10.30-11.30AM St John's Hill Com Cent

Keep on Moving (50+) TUESDAY 10.30 - 11.30AM and FRIDAY 9 45 and 11 15 at The Penfold Centre, 1 Neville Close, SW18 4TJ (opposite King George's Park)

Regenerat-Rise open access day centre, Putney Tel 020 8780 9330

Line Dancing Newlands Hall Putney Vale Tuesdays 11am -12.30 1st week free then £5 per week

St. Michael's Older People's Activity Centre Battersea 0207 228 0245

Active Lifestyles for info on a range of fun activities 0208 871 6373

U3A (university of 3rd age) Learning through groups such as language, history, art, theatre, walks 020 8878 5783

Socialising in Roehampton. For more info contact Mac 07715131813

Keep Fit for Life (50+) TUESDAY 11AM-12PM £3 Tooting Junction Baptist Church, Longley Road, SW17 9LD

MONDAYS Swim Club at Balham pool (contact Furzedown Project above)

Tone & Stretch (50+) FRIDAY 11AM-12PM £3 St Josephs Catholic Church, 218 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LE





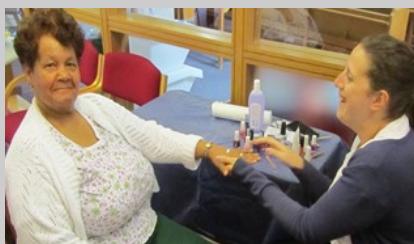
Tips to prevent scams

- 1)** Avoid cold callers offering services at your door or over the phone and asking you to pay in advance
- 2)** Ignore letters, emails or phone calls offering services or asking for charitable payments through cash transfers or asking for your bank details to pay.
- 3)** Don't pay money in advance to claim a prize, or ring to claim a prize
- 4)** Never give your bank details or passwords to anyone you don't know. Your bank or building society will *never* ask you to disclose your full PIN number or full bank details
- 5)** Keep your personal documents, bank and credit cards, cheque books, passwords and pin numbers in a safe place
- 6)** Always ask for official ID if someone comes to the door

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud or you have been targeted for fraud, you should inform Action Fraud (0300 123 2040, www.actionfraud.gov.uk)

Holiday in Balham!!

In the first week of August 45 older people from Balham came to Balham Baptist Church to take part in the fifth annual Holiday at Home event. Using the theme of "Time" we spent two days designing clocks, making sand art, quizzing and singing together. We formed a scratch



choir, played carpet bowls, watched a film, and joined together in two delicious lunches and a sumptuous cream tea. Some even had their hands and nails pampered and went home with a shiny new manicure! We made a timeline showing all our birthdays and the significant events of our



year of birth and had people aged from 100 to nearly 2! Through it all there was a chance to chat with other people, and to hear their stories.

Volunteers from 7 Balham Churches' Holiday at Home team made the event a huge success.

Happy Birthday Furzedown Project 40 Years Young!!

The Project was founded in 1975 by a local GP, Dr. Norman Levinson who became concerned about many of his older patients whom he realised were isolated and therefore more likely to become ill or depressed.

A key principle of the Project is that it offers opportunities to older people to decide on the activities they want and to run them themselves. The members make up the Board of Trustees and they make the decisions.

The Project's Manager, Mick Morrell says 'In an era when policy makers express anxiety about how our society can cope with the growing 'burden' of an aged population, Furzedown Project demonstrates that one successful solution is to harness the energy and creativity of older people themselves.'

Pictured are the Mayor of Wandsworth, Cllr Nicola Nadeli, with celebrity Sylvia Syms, Marjory Levinson, widow of Dr. Levinson, Moira Harboard, Chair of Trustees and volunteer drivers of the new brand new bus.





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We're on the Web

www.wandspensforum.org.uk



Affiliated to National Pensioners' Convention

Please send feedback, articles, views, photos etc for inclusion in the newsletter to

Weinstein.jenny@gmail.com

New Service for Carers of People Living with Dementia

Referral via dementia specialist nurse at St. Georges. More info from Alzheimers Society Tel : 020 88 77 00 33

Forthcoming Forum Meetings

All meetings are held at the Anchor Centre, Garratt Lane between 2pm and 4pm unless stated

September 8th

'Care4Me' data base of Wandsworth Services speaker from Life-times

October 13

Carers Centre (tbc)

November 10th

Phil Jew from Citizen's Advice Bureau

December 8th

Jane Ellison MP (if available)
Jollity and mince pies

If you would like to join or re-join the Wandsworth Older People's Forum, please complete the subscription form below and return with your payment of £5 (annual subscription for individuals or organizations) to:

Membership Secretary Wandsworth Older People's Forum C/O WCEN, DRCA Charlotte Despard Ave, London SW11 5HD.

I wish to join the Wandsworth Older People's Forum
Name...(individual or organization)

.....
Address

.....
..... postcode.....

phone...(h).....

(mob).....

Email.....

I prefer correspondence/newsletter (tick preference)

by post

By e mail

I might be interested to volunteer

Make checks payable to Wandsworth Older People's Forum